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PIR

PHOTOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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SEISMIC EVENT NEAR CONSTRUCTION OF THE IRTYSH-KARAGANDA CANAL, USSR

DECLASS REVIEW by NIMA/DOD

CIA/PIR 63036
DATE FEB 1980
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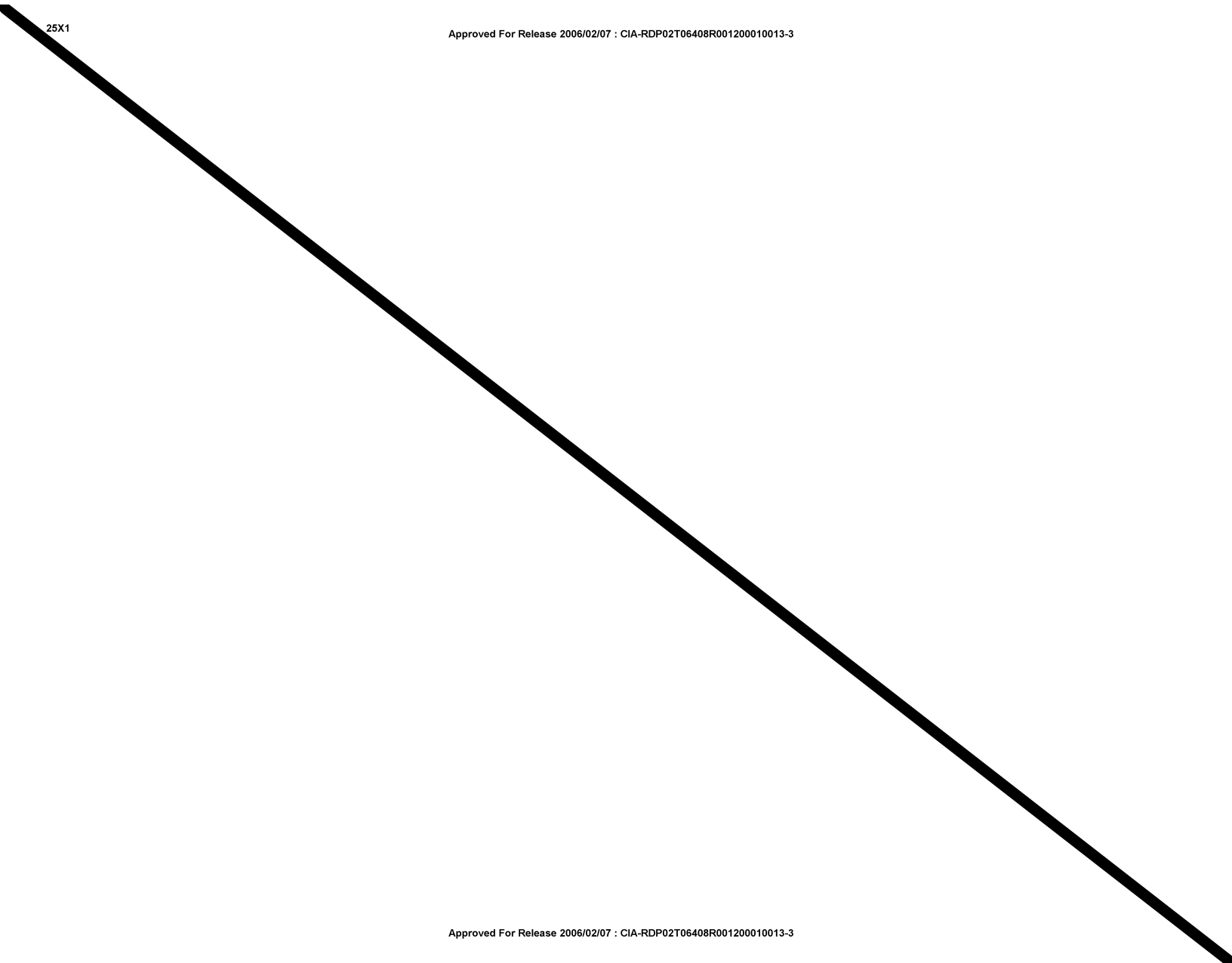

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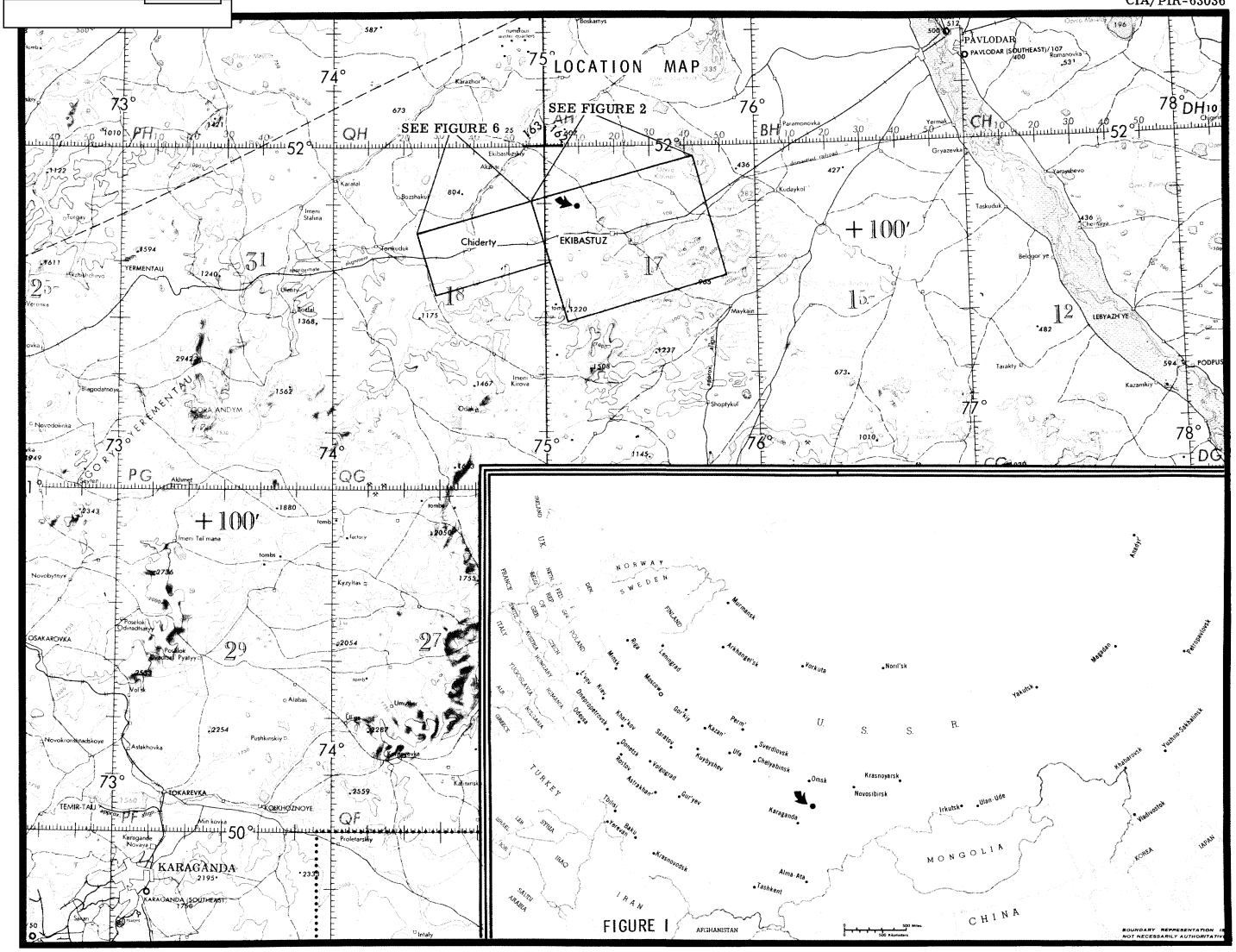

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INTRODUCTION

A seismic disturbance was reported by the U.S. Atomic Energy Detection System to have occurred on 26 December 1965 at approximately 52°N, 75°E. Previous events detected in the same area were probably from the use of explosives in the construction of the Irtysh-Karaganda Canal. 1/ An examination of [redacted] photography before and after the 26 December event revealed more evidence of explosives activity connected with the canal construction. A suspect area for the seismic event of 26 December was located approximately 12 nm SSE of the reported coordinates.

DISCUSSION

The active area of canal construction is located near Ekibastuz, USSR. The outlined area on the location map (Figure 1) depicts the area shown by photographs in this report. The arrow points to the location where a blast causing the seismic event probably occurred.

Various types of construction activity can be seen along that portion of the canal in the Ekibastuz area (Figure 2). Both explosive and machine methods are being used to excavate material. The deeper machine excavations may be sites for pumping stations; the older excavations have remained deeper than that portion of the canal immediately upgrade. The small explosive excavation present on photography of [redacted] but not evident on the coverage of [redacted] connected two separate segments of the canal. The shock from this explosion was probably not of sufficient magnitude to be detected by seismograph.

It is believed that the seismic event of 26 December occurred in an area where preparations for a shot have been underway for some time (Figure 3). A line of drill holes were prominent about 8 nautical miles NW of Ekibastuz as early as [redacted] Ten holes with an average spacing of 155 feet were in line with a machine-excavated area. Additional holes may have been in the scarred area immediately east of the excavation. This activity was new since the previous report. 1/ The same holes were barely discernible due to snow cover on the day before the event [redacted] Cable connections between the holes indicating charges in place were probably hidden by snow. Some faint lines and/or tracking activity from a possible detonation control point were evident. Although the interpretation is inconclusive because of poor quality photography, a dark-toned area seen through clouds after the event [redacted] is at this same location in relation to other identifiable features. The dark tone covers an area larger than might be expected; possibly strong winds caused explosive debris to drift downwind. The approximate geographical coordinates for this area as the likely location for a detonation on 26 December 1965 are 51-49N 75-09E.

[redacted] another area of 28 new drill holes (Figure 4) was identified between the shot preparations described above and the previous limit of canal construction as seen on photography of [redacted] 1/ The spacing of these holes averages 245 feet. Tracking was evident between the holes. It seems doubtful that this second string of holes were included with the first group for a single blast because a probable drilling rig was operating between both areas. What appears to be unused cable was present near the rig either in long rows or in a disarrayed order. Furthermore, no dark-toned area was apparent on [redacted] under similar cloud conditions. It is felt that the preparations in this second area will result in further explosives activity in the near future.

The scarring at right angles to the canal (Figure 4) was unchanged since [redacted] This and similar scarring elsewhere possibly mark points where diversionary canals will tie into the main canal for irrigation purposes. A new canal system southeast of Ekibastuz (Figure 5) was noted on [redacted] for the first time. This canal is probably part of the network of diversionary canals. At present, there is no evidence of explosives activity in this area.

The exact route the canal will take is undetermined in the area west of Ekibastuz (Figure 6). The canal may connect to the isolated machine excavation northwest of the other excavations, and eventually join the Shiderty River north of a small reservoir dam. A probable pipeline also appears to be under construction. Where uncovered, the pipeline consists of two parallel ditches; ground scars indicate it will join the river south of the dam. The pipeline may conceivably divert water from the main canal to bypass one or more pumping stages.

A construction/support area (Figure 7) is located near Chiderty Station, 51-42N 74-39E.

All measurements have been made by the NPIC Technical Intelligence Division and are considered to be accurate within ± 3%.

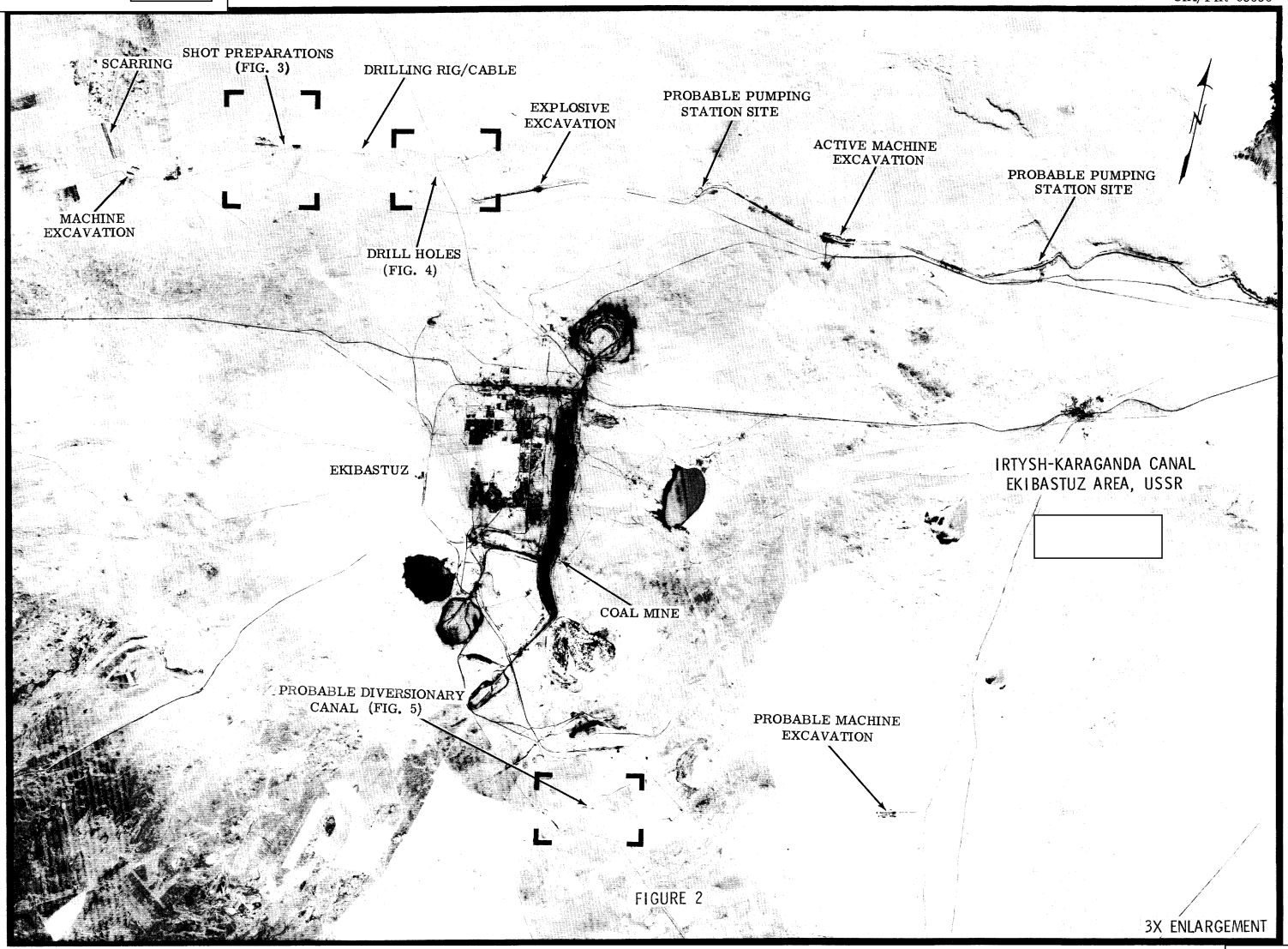
SCARRING
SHOT PREPARATIONS (FIG. 3)
DRILLING RIG/CABLE
EXPLOSIVE EXCAVATION
PROBABLE PUMPING STATION SITE
ACTIVE MACHINE EXCAVATION
PROBABLE PUMPING STATION SITE
MACHINE EXCAVATION
DRILL HOLES (FIG. 4)
EKIBASTUZ
IRTYSH-KARAGANDA CANAL
EKIBASTUZ AREA, USSR
[redacted]
COAL MINE
PROBABLE DIVERSIONARY CANAL (FIG. 5)
PROBABLE MACHINE EXCAVATION
3X ENLARGEMENT

FIGURE 2

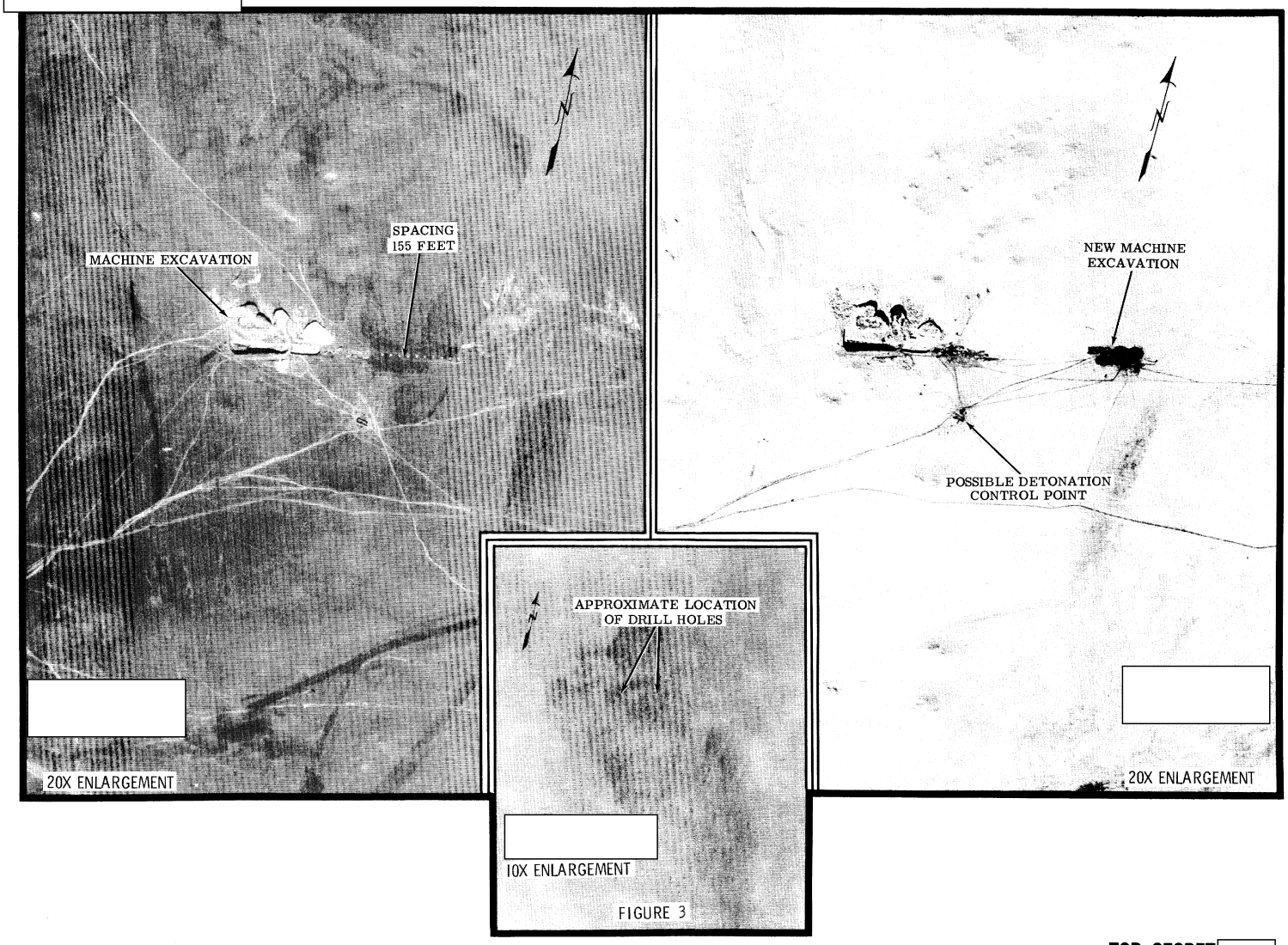
MACHINE EXCAVATION
SPACING
155 FEET
20X ENLARGEMENT
NEW MACHINE
EXCAVATION
POSSIBLE DETONATION
CONTROL POINT
20X ENLARGEMENT
APPROXIMATE LOCATION
OF DRILL HOLES
10X ENLARGEMENT

FIGURE 3

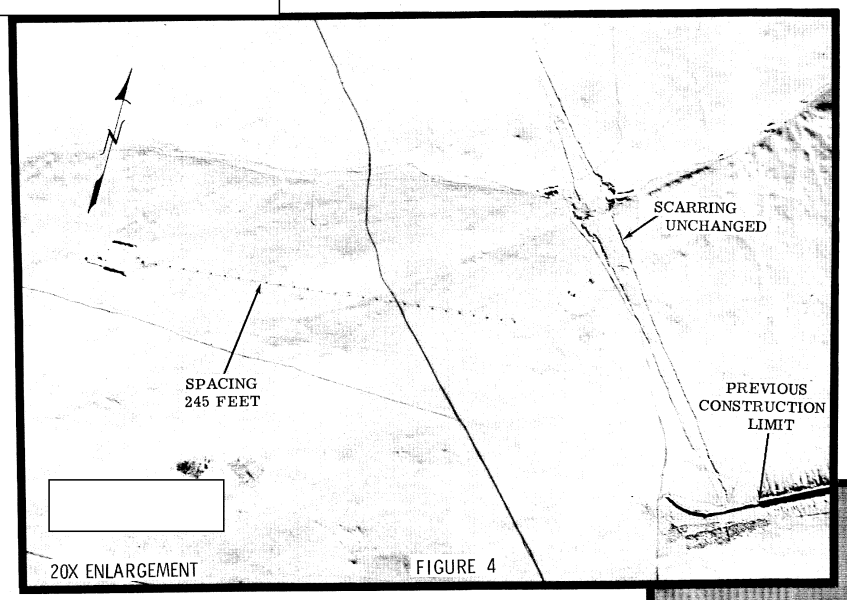

FIGURE 4

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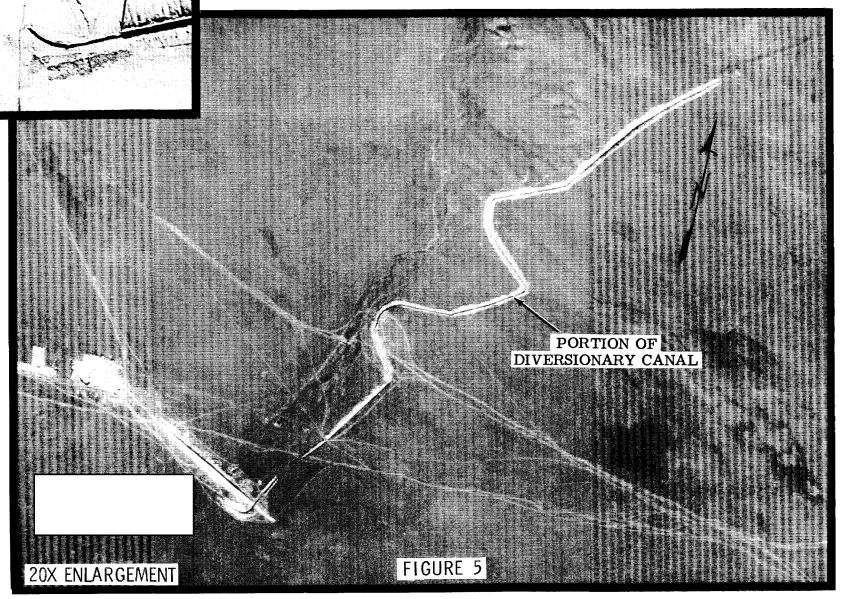

FIGURE 5

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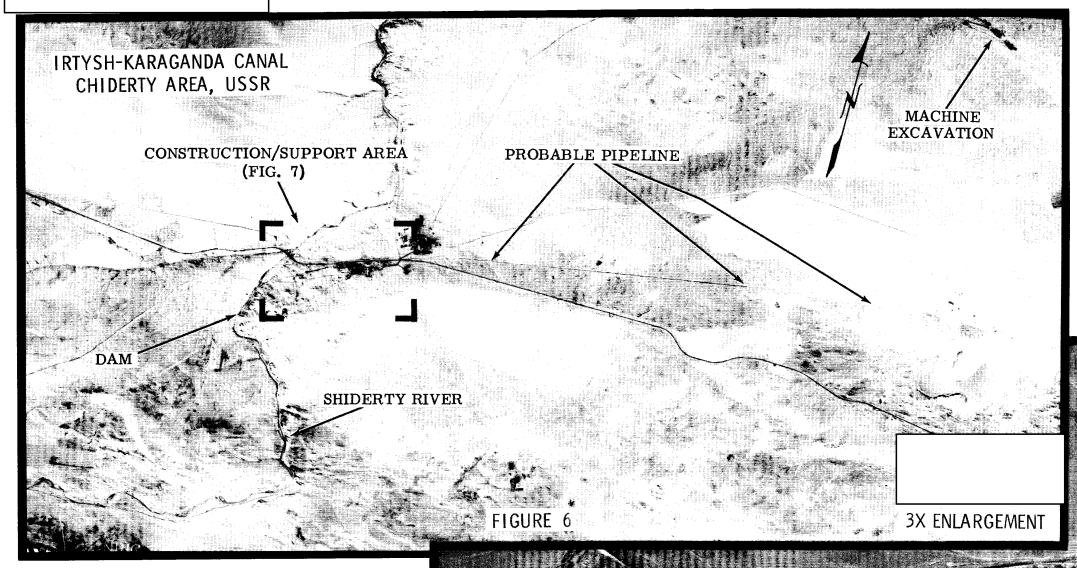

FIGURE 6

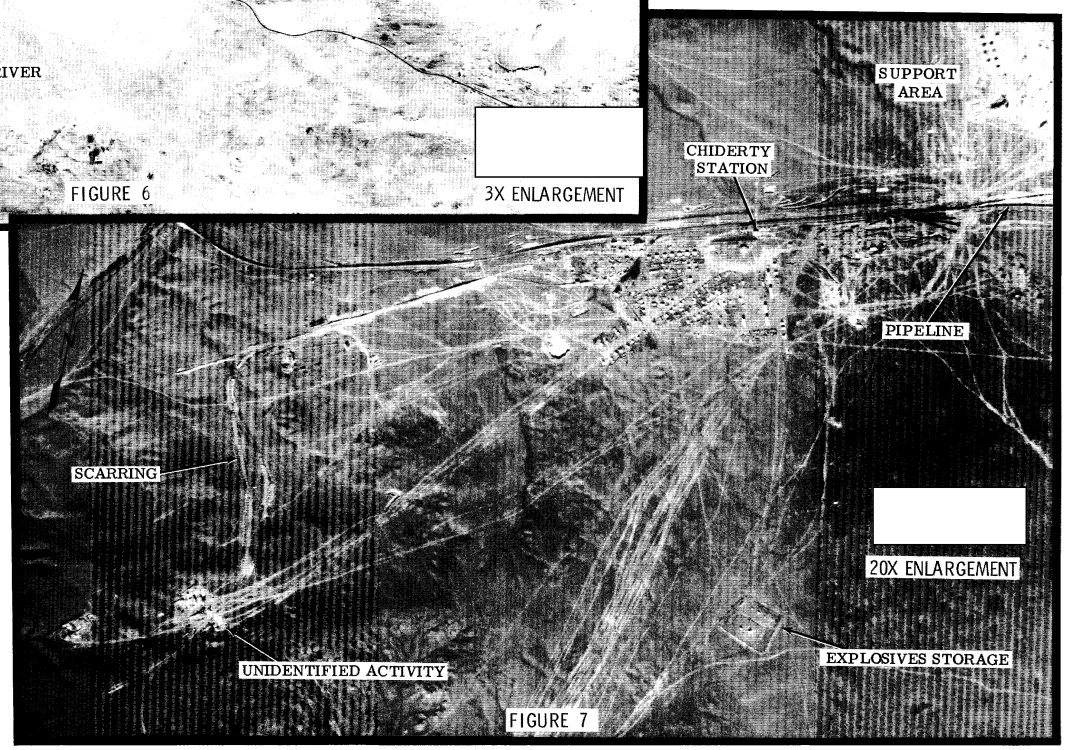

FIGURE 7

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PHOTOGRAPHY

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MAPS AND CHARTS

ACIC. USAF Operational Navigation Chart, Sheet ONC-E-6, Scale 1:1,000,000, 1st classified ed., December 1961. (CONFIDENTIAL)

AMS. Series DESPA-1, Sheet NM 43-2, Ekibastuz, Scale 1:250,000, 1st ed., December 1963. (TOP SECRET 25X1

DOCUMENT

1. CIA. PIR-3009/65, Explosions Associated with Construction of the Irtysh-Karaganda Canal Near Ekibastuz, USSR, June 1965. (TOP SECRET 25X1

REQUIREMENT NO.

C-SI5-83,258

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